



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 24th INFANTRY DIVISION (MECH) and FORT RILEY
FORT RILEY, KANSAS 66442-5000

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

AFZN-GA-AS

16 April 2005

SUBJECT: Minutes of the Fort Riley Retiree Council

Call to Order: A meeting of the Fort Riley Retiree Council was called to order by the chairperson, BG (Ret) Dayle Williamson, USA, at 1013 hours on 16 April 2005.

Invocation: MAJ (Ret) Kenneth Edmiston, USA, offered the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance: BG Williamson led council members in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Minutes: The minutes of the council's meeting on 4 Feb 2005 were approved.

Committee Reports:

Submission of Issues to the Chief of Staff of the Army Retiree Council: BG (Ret) Tom Kennedy, USA, Chairperson – No Report.

Post Exchange and Commissary: SFC (Ret) Robert Peterson, USA, Chairperson – There are no longer any scheduled meeting for the PX and commissary, however, there are new management personnel who are willing to try to get a council together. The commissary will be closed April 18 and 19 for renovations. MSG (Ret) Mike Heronemous, USA, added that AAFES Headquarters has approved retirees to buy the new Army PT uniform at Clothing Sales. BG Kennedy remarked that he thought the commissary was going overboard on checking coupons at the checkout. Clerks must check and initial each coupon, and he feels this shows a lack of trust on the part of the commissary. Other council members remarked they had not experienced this. COL (Ret) Verlyn Steinkruger, USA, suggested that the new commissary manager should be encouraged to hold the case-lot sale at the commissary the same date as the Retiree Appreciation Day. The commissary manager said he wanted to schedule one in Oct; perhaps this can be worked out.

Special Projects: LTC (Ret) Diana M. Chapel, USA, Chairperson - No Report.

Irwin Army Hospital and Pharmacy: LTC (Ret) Stanley Sutton, USA, Chairperson – Remarked that the new pharmacy operation was great! SFC Peterson noted that by taking a class at the pharmacy, it was now possible to get up to three over-the-counter medicines each month. The class is offered periodically and takes about an hour; it is very worthwhile to check into.

Liaison with Military Retiree Organizations: CSM (Ret) Richard A. Young, USA, Chairperson - No Report

Nomination of Members for Chief of Staff of the Army Retiree Council: COL (Ret) Marion Manion, USA, Chairperson - No Report.

Support of RSO: SGM (Ret) Joseph A. Gilmore, USA, Chairperson - No Report.

Legislative Committee: MAJ (Ret) Max McAllister, USA, spoke about the latest NAUS report from the new president, MG (Ret) William M. Matz, Jr., USA. Fifty counselors with recent experience in Iraq and Afghanistan have been hired with the VA to help those returning from the war zone. On April 6, the TRICARE dental program is in affect. In Branson, MO from June 13th through 19th, there will be a Vietnam Veteran event. There has been a new medal recently approved for service in Iraq and Afghanistan (Iraq Campaign Medal). Retiree burial benefits may include a two person funeral detail provided free of charge. BG Williamson added that he has high praise for the funeral details from Fort Riley, KS. They have been working with Nebraska troops and have been a great help. He also noted that the state of Nebraska will be getting caissons and horses from Fort Myer that will be in use in Nebraska cemeteries. The horses will also be used for rehab purposes. COL Steinkruger added that these funeral details are huge burdens for the units and he had at one time checked to see if retirees could be used to perform these services at cemeteries, but did not get a response. BG Williamson called our attention to several handouts he brought. Specifically, there is a lot of information on Survivors' Benefits Program (SBP). Senator Ben Nelson of Nebraska is a signatory on bill S185, which addresses the inequities of SBP and Dependency Indemnity Compensation (DIC). He also noted some changes in health care for Guardsmen and Reservists. For example, if they are activated for 90 days or more, they can get one year of TRICARE. This is very helpful if the soldier does not have any other healthcare. He also noted that 10% of those called up cannot serve due to medical reasons, and this needs to be addressed as well.

Discussion:

Committee Assignments: The council voted in favor that the chairman vacancy in the Chaplain position be jointly held by MAJ Edmiston and SSG (Ret) Carroll Everist, USA. Likewise, the Legislative Committee Chairman vacancy will be co-chaired by MAJ McAllister and SSG Everist.

Membership Vacancies: BG Kennedy introduced COL (Ret) Verne Converse, USA, to the council as a nomination for membership. He is a retired pilot (Air Force and Army) and is currently farming in Eskridge, KS. He was unanimously voted in to fill the officer vacancy, left by the death of LTC (Ret) Carol Beggs, USA.

Retiree Newsletter 2005: Ms. Kathy Cunningham-Tucker asked the council to review the list of draft articles suggested for the next retiree newsletter. MSG Heronemus was asked for input for an article concerning plans for the new Ft. Riley cemetery, and LTC (Ret) Jack Hoagland, USA, was asked for input for an article reference the newly in-acted Kansas legislation regarding DD 214's.

RAD 2005 Update: Kathy indicated the status of the speaker is still in the air. MG Dennis E. Hardy, Commander, 24th Infantry Division, has been asked, and is currently available, however, this is subject to change due to mission requirements. Other local speakers will be used as alternates if MG Hardy is unable to attend. There are so many issues pertaining to the future strength of Fort Riley that it was felt that a local speaker might be the most advantageous to our audience for this particular year's event. The council agreed in principle, to the schedule, but asked for some tweaking of the minutes allotted to the individual speakers. Kathy also noted that she does not wish to be added as a speaker, but felt it was important that the RSO does have a display of some type set up as part of the County Fair. The Special Projects Committee and the Support of RSO Committee will be asked to assist. This year's RAD will be held at Riley's Conference Center, coffee and donuts will be included courtesy of the Manhattan Chamber of Commerce. The plans presented for the RAD were approved.

RSO Remarks:

The plaque for the late LTC (Ret) Carol Beggs was really lovely, and was much appreciated by Mrs. Betty Beggs.


Old Business: None

New Business:

SSG Everist noted that there is a new National Korean War Museum in Oxford, Nebraska. He brought back some programs for the council members. Items in the museum came from another facility in Hawaii. BG Williamson also noted that there is a Prisoners museum in Holdrege, NE. He also noted that a personal friend designed the POW/MIA flag, which features a profile of his missing brother.

Adjournment: There being no further old or new business to discuss, BG Kennedy offered a motion that the meeting be adjourned. Motion was seconded and the council adjourned at 1128 hours. The next meeting will be Saturday, July 16, 2005, at 1030 hours.

DIANA M. CHAPEL
LTC (Ret), USA, Recorder


DAYLE E. WILLIAMSON
BG, (Ret), USA, Chairperson


KATHY CUNNINGHAM-TUCKER
DAC, Retirement Services Office